

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1 and 7 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the Amendments and Remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating claim 2, 6 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In light of this indication, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter recited in dependent claim 6. Further, claims 2-6 and 8 have been canceled. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 1, 3-5 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over JP 63-160659 in view of Figlar et al. is moot.

CLAIM FOR PRIORITY

The Examiner has not recognized the Applicant's claim for foreign priority. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested the Examiner acknowledge Applicant's claim for foreign priority in the next Office Action.

DRAWINGS

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has approved the Formal Drawings submitted by the Applicant. The drawings comply with the requirements of the USPTO. No further action is necessary.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Examiner has acknowledged the Information Disclosure Statement filed on January 30, 2004. An initialed copy of the PTO-1449 has been received from the Examiner. No further action is necessary at this time.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination.

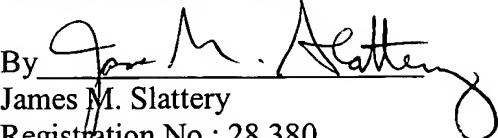
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: August 11, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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